

Take Action: Building a Strong Foundation

I Kings 18:1-2, 18-46: Fire from Heaven

Choose an activity to illustrate the importance of choosing a firm foundation for success (be it a person, a stone or background knowledge.) Follow up with a discussion on the implications of a firm foundation for our own lives.

Warm-up

Choose one or more of the following options to get the students thinking!

Human Pyramid

If you have a large group of students, have them build a “human pyramid” (see picture). Work inside on a carpeted surface or mats, or outside on a lawn or other soft-landing area. Use the largest and strongest students as a base and balance smaller students on top. As the pyramid is being built, discuss what structure will make the best foundation, the strongest structure, etc. What can you do to make the pyramid less likely to topple?



Build an Altar of Twelve Stones

Find twelve large stones. Have the students build an altar like Elijah. Encourage them to look for flat surfaces to make a sturdy structure. If the stones are not uniform, consider careful strategic placement of the stones for the strongest altar. Discuss what it must have been like for Elijah to take the stones of the destroyed altar and build a new sturdy one.

Play a Game without Explaining the Rules

Here is a game that will tease the brain! At least two people in the room must know the rules before the game starts. Everyone else will try to discover them when playing the game. The game is called “Black Magic!” One person (who knows the rules) will leave the room. The remaining group will decide on one object in the room for the person to guess when they are invited back. Once the person returns, a Questioner (who also knows the rules) will ask simple questions: Is it (name object)? Or is it (name object)? The trigger question for revealing the real object is that the penultimate object will be black in color. After asking about the black object (with a negative

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response) the chosen object will be selected, and the answer will be “yes!” If nobody is able to figure out how the game is played, continue with another round. The Questioner can exchange places with the person who goes out. When someone thinks they know the answer, they should not divulge it, but should be the next to leave the room and guess. If they are able to guess correctly, they have figured out the simple rule to the game and may then be the Questioner. If they have not guessed correctly, the game continues. Stop when you have spent enough time on it. This game may baffle people for a long time. Do not reveal the rules to those who are unable to figure it out! This game may be played again and again.

Discussion

1. What does it mean to “get a firm footing in life” or be grounded? Have you met people who are like this? What are their main characteristics?
2. Compare this person with someone who changes their mind every time the wind changes. What might be missing from the life of a person like this?
3. Elijah re-built the altar of the Lord. Over time it had fallen apart—it had fallen out of use. In a similar way, we may know truths from the Word, but we may not always put them together in ways that help us form a solid plan of action in our lives. When we take all of the separate things that we know and put them together in an organized way in our minds, we forge a strong platform on which to base our actions.
4. What would have happened to the Human Pyramid or Altar of Twelve Stones if we had not taken time to select the strongest foundation? What might this look like in a person’s life?
5. What is the difference between knowing the rules (Ten Commandments) that make us eternally happy, and not knowing them? (Think about this by considering who was more frustrated when playing Black Magic—those who knew the rules, or those who did not know them?) How might this compare with people who know what will bring true happiness in their lives vs. people who do not have faith or read the Word?
6. After Elijah carefully prepared the altar and the sacrifice, the Lord came and consumed the altar with fire from heaven. What do we need to do in order for the Lord to come into our lives?
7. How might we support our friends in making choices that will bring the Lord closer? (There are many ways to approach this, e.g. we may simply separate ourselves from negative behaviors, and so not support their choices, or we may say something to them directly to help them think about what they may be doing to themselves and others. We can become a friend to what is true and look for that in other people.)